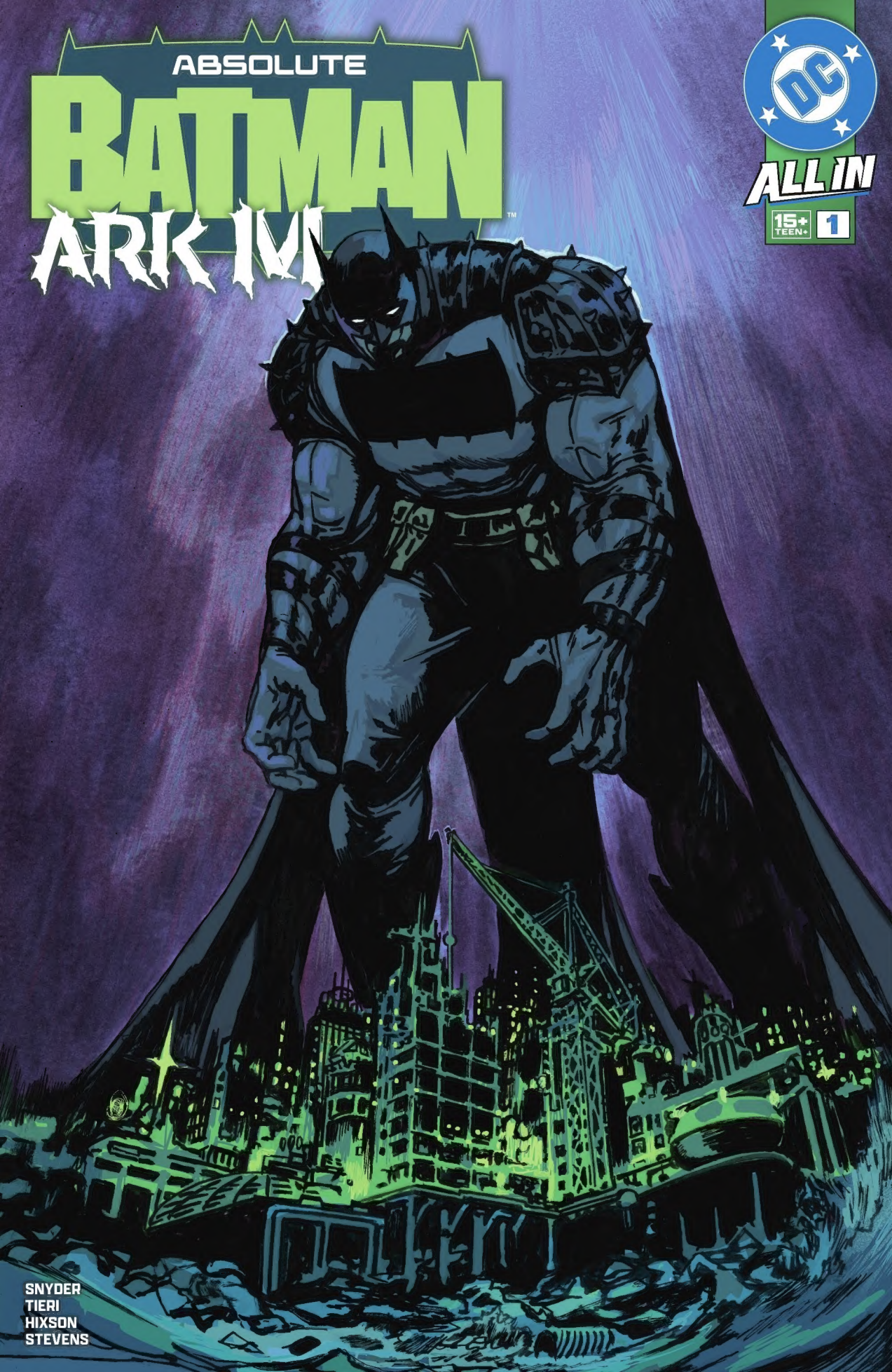
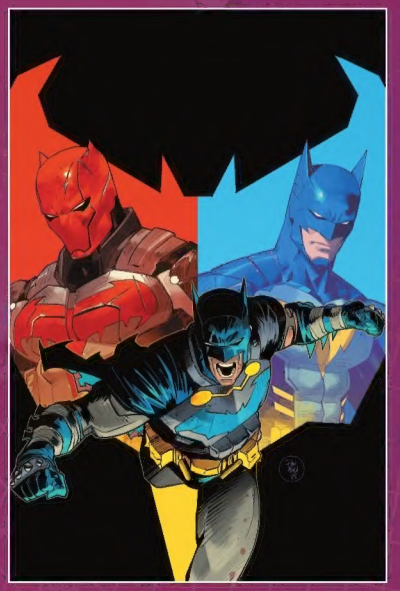

ABSOLUTE
BATMAN
ARK IV
DC
ALL IN
15+ TEEN+
1
SNYDER
TIERI
HIXSON
STEVENS

START THE NEW YEAR

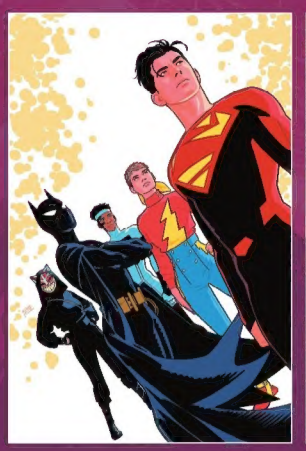
WITH HARD-HITTING DC K.O. TIE-INS ON SALE THIS JANUARY!



DC K.O. KNIGHTFIGHT #3

DC K.O.: GREEN LANTERN GALACTIC SLAM #1

TITANS #31



DC K.O.: THE KIDS ARE ALL FIGHT SPECIAL #1

SUPERMAN #34

THE FLASH #29

JUSTICE LEAGUE UNLIMITED #15

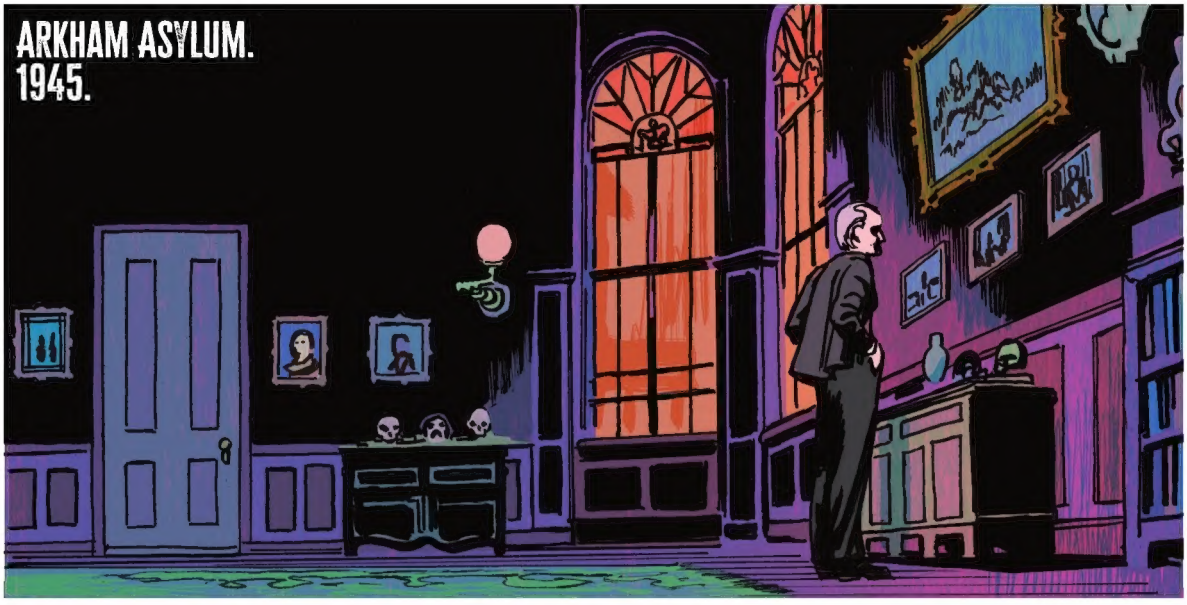
DC K.O.

CONTINUES IN FEBRUARY WITH THE BIGGEST TWIST YET!

These are the writings of Dr. Amadeus Arkham.
They serve as a chronicle of this infamous place that bears my name...
...Arkham Asylum.

Yet this book is also other things...

...it is my confession. It holds secrets I will take with me to my grave.
It is also a warning. About the terrible evil I have unleashed upon the world...
...and a plea that you, reader, stop it before it's too late...
Who Was Jack The Ripper?
By Amadeus Arkham


ARKHAM ASYLUM.
1945.

RAP! RAP!

GOOD DAY, DR. ARKHAM. I'M NOT TOO EARLY, AM I?
IT'S FINE. THE FASTER WE COMPLETE THIS PROCESS, THE BETTER.

YOU'RE...NOT *RECONSIDERING,* ARE YOU?
NO...NO, IT'S TIME. AND I DO BELIEVE THE PRICE REFLECTS THAT...
...AND HOW DETERMINED I AM TO GET A DEAL DONE.

NOW, IF YOU'LL JUST FOLLOW ME, I'LL TAKE YOU FOR A TOUR OF THE GROUNDS...
I COULDN'T HELP BUT NOTICE... THIS WOMAN. IF YOU DON'T MIND ME ASKING...WHO IS SHE?

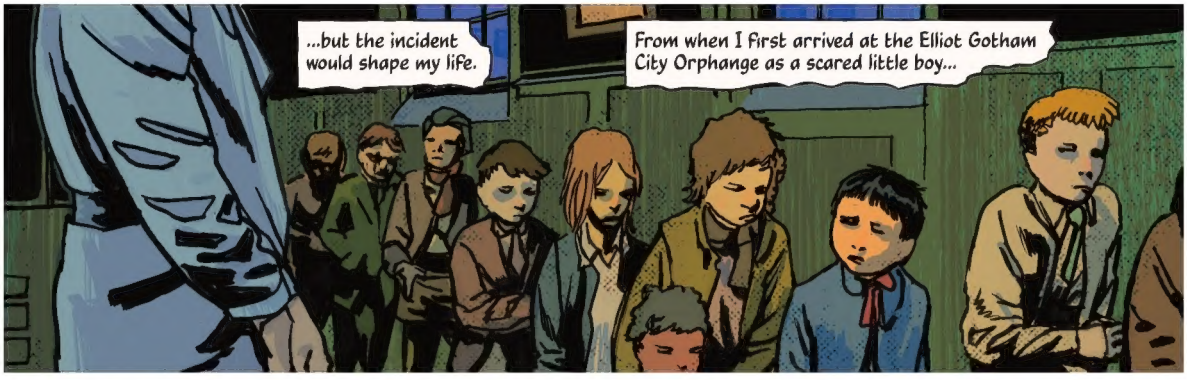
THAT WOULD BE...MY *MOTHER.*

IN SOME WAYS, IT CAN BE SAID...

"...THIS PLACE BEGAN WITH HER."
My father fought for the Union. My first memories are of my mother standing watch at our front window awaiting his return. Lee had surrendered at Appomattox Court House, you see, and my father was long past due.
The waiting had taken its toll on my mother.
It had taken its toll on me.
But this night would be different. This night the dark silhouette of a Union soldier marched up our walk.
It was him, my mother exclaimed! After all this time!
Father was home!

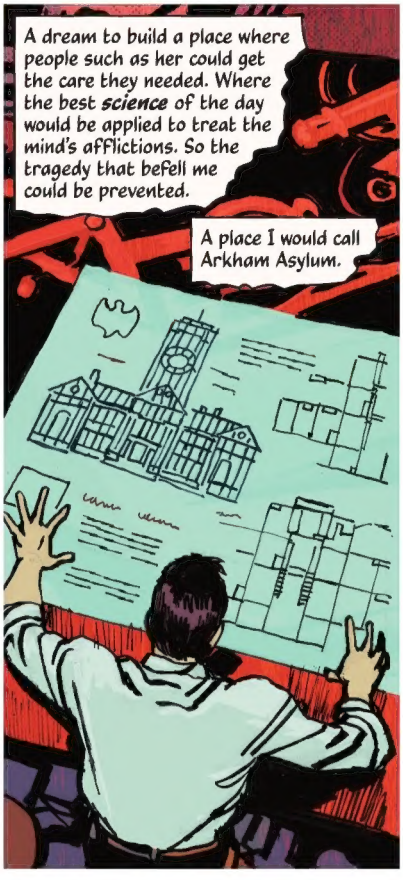
Or so we thought.
We quickly realized the soldier at the door was not my father.
The letter he handed my mother would explain everything, he said.
And so it did.
It came from the newly installed President Johnson...
...informing us that father had been killed at the Battle of Palmito Ranch. Ironically, a battle fought after Lee's surrender. Meaning...
...my father died in a pointless battle.
It was all too much for my mother to take. The soldier, to his credit, tried to console her.
But she...
...had other ideas.
BLAM

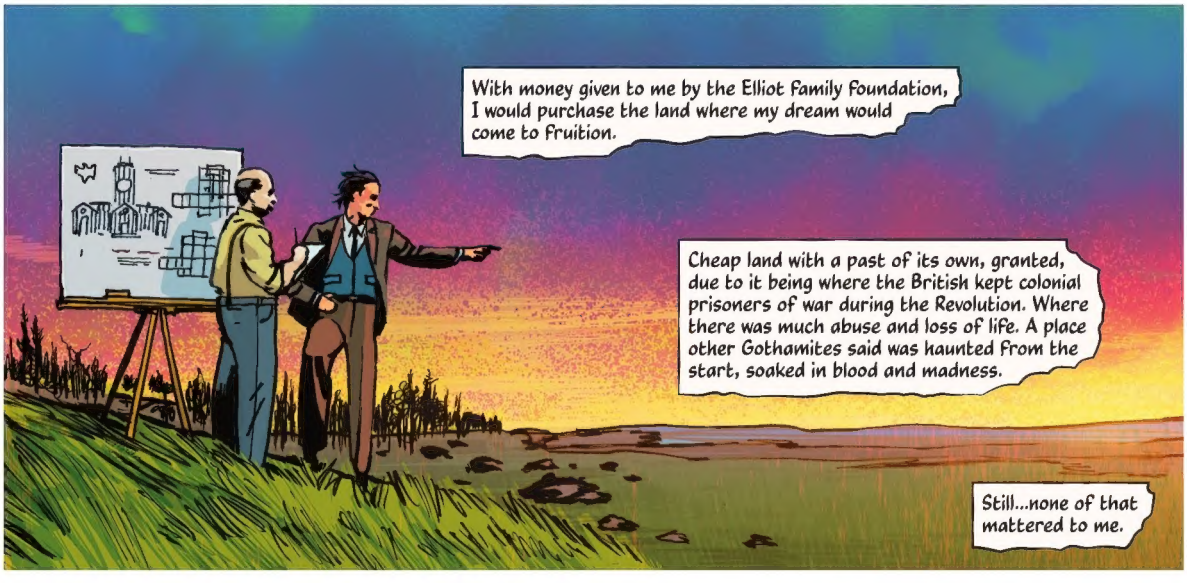
As the soldier's blood started to pool at our doorstep, my mother looked over the faces of my siblings.
BLAM
And proceeded to execute them one...
BLAM
...by one.
But when she came to me...
...she paused.
BLAM
And turned the gun on herself instead.
Why she chose to spare me that day, I will never know...


...but the incident would shape my life.
From when I first arrived at the Elliot Gotham City Orphange as a scared little boy...

...to the day I emerged from its doors, a confident young man with nothing more than the clothes on my back and a dream.

A dream to help people like my mother.


A dream to build a place where people such as her could get the care they needed. Where the best science of the day would be applied to treat the mind's afflictions. So the tragedy that befell me could be prevented.
A place I would call Arkham Asylum.


With money given to me by the Elliot Family Foundation, I would purchase the land where my dream would come to fruition.
Cheap land with a past of its own, granted, due to it being where the British kept colonial prisoners of war during the Revolution. Where there was much abuse and loss of life. A place other Gothamites said was haunted from the start, soaked in blood and madness.
Still...none of that mattered to me.

Not as long as some good could come out of it.

In the beginning, Arkham was everything I wanted it to be. A good facility with a full staff of like-minded individuals getting patients the help they so desperately needed.
Even those patients who, with Gotham being Gotham, were a bit more...

...in need, shall we say.

My mother would be proud, I believed. That said...
GOTHAM MAN TURNS TRAGEDY INTO TRIUMPH
AMADEUS ARKHAM CREATED THE FACILITY GOTHAM SO DESPERATELY NEEDED. TAKES INMATES NO ONE ELSE WANTS

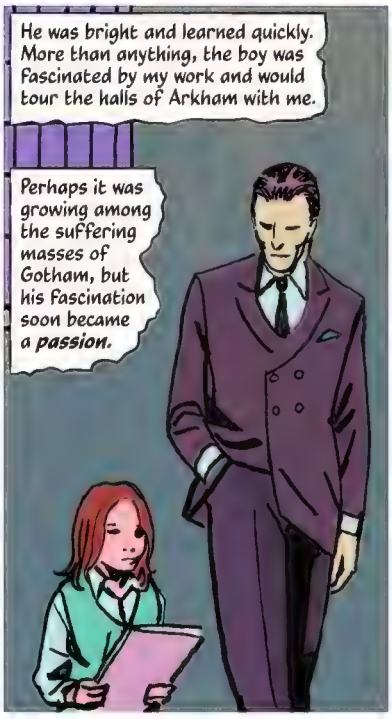
...Arkham was not without its issues in those initial years. One issue in particular...
...a man so vile and heinous I will not even utter his name. Let's call him Jack Doe for the purpose of this journal.

By the time he was sent to us, Jack had murdered multiple people, men, women, children. And soon after his arrival, he killed two nurses and disemboweled another prisoner. He took glee in killing. He was always laughing, a horrible grin on his face...
...he was the type of inmate that threatened the very existence of Arkham.
And so he became the patient I was most determined to help.

SO, TELL ME, DOCTOR... WHY?
...WHY HAS ARKHAM SO CLEARLY FALLEN ON SUCH HARD TIMES?
FEWER AND FEWER PATIENTS, FOR ONE THING. FANCIER AND MORE-MODERN FACILITIES SPONSORED BY THE LAZURUS CORP IN METROPOLIS AND ELSEWHERE, FOR ANOTHER.
THE TRUTH IS, THIS PLACE WOULD HAVE HAD TO CLOSE YEARS AGO. IF NOT FOR THE KINDNESS OF BENEFACTORS...SUCH AS YOURSELF.
HA! IT APPEARS YOU'VE DONE YOUR HOMEWORK, DOCTOR. I LIKE MY DONATIONS TO BE ANONYMOUS.
LOOK, I'M NOT JUST GOING TO HAND THIS INSTITUTION OVER TO SOMEONE I KNOW NOTHING ABOUT. SO YES, I DID MY RESEARCH AND I APPRECIATE YOUR GENEROSITY.
MENTAL HEALTH IS IMPORTANT TO YOU, CLEARLY...
IT IS. I'VE SEEN UP CLOSE THE SUFFERING CAUSED BY CONDITIONS OF THE MIND AND I FEEL IT'S OUR DUTY TO FIND CURES SO THAT YOUNGER GENERATIONS NEVER HAVE TO CONTEND WITH THEM. OUR CHILDREN DESERVE A BETTER FUTURE.
DO YOU HAVE CHILDREN, DOCTOR?
CHILDREN? I...WELL... UM...
NO. I NEVER HAD ANY CHILDREN.

1885. It was raining the night he arrived.
Covered in blood. So much blood even the rain couldn't wash it away.
How did he get that way? Whose blood was it?
The boy claimed he did not know, but it was clear he had suffered greatly in life.
An orphan, raised on the streets. He was near death when I found him.
Being an orphan myself, I took pity on the lad. I took him in. And eventually, in time...

...I took him under my wing.


He was bright and learned quickly. More than anything, the boy was fascinated by my work and would tour the halls of Arkham with me.
Perhaps it was growing among the suffering masses of Gotham, but his fascination soon became a passion.

He believed in the good of this place. And in me. And I dare say, with no heir of my own...

...I came to think of him as my own son. Someone who would carry on my name and my work.
"Tomorrow is a new page, Father," the boy would say, no matter how bad things seemed at the asylum. A private phrase to buoy my spirits. He was ever the optimist...

...even when he met Jack Doe.
Jack was being punished for brutalizing yet another nurse. He taunted the boy, tried to get under his skin, ever a cruel joker. But still...

...the boy remained undeterred.

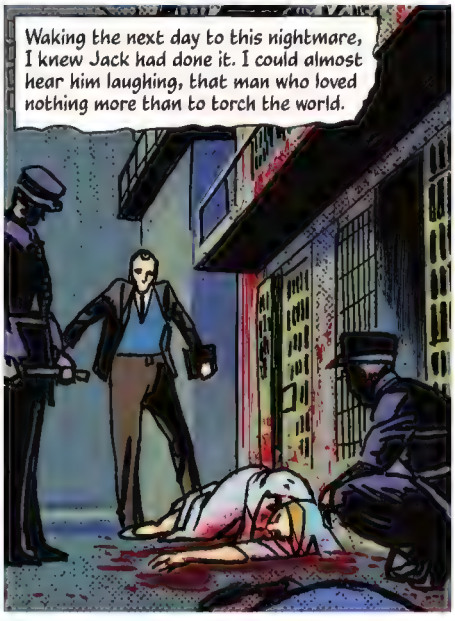
Were the likes of Jack beyond our help? I confess, I started to wonder...

...especially when Jack escaped his cell two days later.
When he held the boy hostage.
I did everything I could to talk Jack down. Thankfully, while Jack was cunning...
...he wasn't stupid. He knew killing the boy would result in instant death.
I was just happy to get the boy back.
Even as I hugged him, I knew the light in him had only been strengthened.

YOU STILL DO GET PATIENTS, I SEE...
FEW AND FAR BETWEEN AND WITH A SMALL STAFF TO HELP ME AT THIS POINT, BUT YES, WE DO.
I MUST GIVE YOU CREDIT, DR. ARKHAM. THROUGH ALL THE UPS AND DOWNS OF THIS PLACE, YOU'VE STILL MANAGED TO KEEP THINGS AFLOAT.
EVEN AFTER THE MOST *INFAMOUS INCIDENT* OF ALL.
I'M SORRY... I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE REFERRING TO...
OF COURSE YOU DO, DOCTOR. AS YOU HAVE DONE YOUR HOMEWORK ON ME, SO TOO HAVE I DONE MINE ON YOU AND THIS FACILITY.
SO PLEASE, DOCTOR...LET'S NOT CONTINUE TO INSULT MY INTELLIGENCE AND DISCUSS THE TRUE REASON THIS INSTITUTION'S REPUTATION HAS SUFFERED FOR DECADES...
...TELL ME ABOUT THE *BREAKOUT*...

1886. It was all due to a damned careless orderly.
I had warned the fool. Time and time again. Whatever you do, do not get too close to the inmates.
His keys were taken. His throat slashed from ear to ear with a sharpened toothbrush.
And he was but the first.
He released a number of his fellow inmates and they made their way down to the furnace room...
...deciding against confronting the armed guards at the front doors.
Whatever the case, they quietly worked through the night...
...dug out a tunnel from behind the furnace, and just like that...

...they were gone.


Waking the next day to this nightmare, I knew Jack had done it. I could almost hear him laughing, that man who loved nothing more than to torch the world.

It was a revelation that made my heart stop.

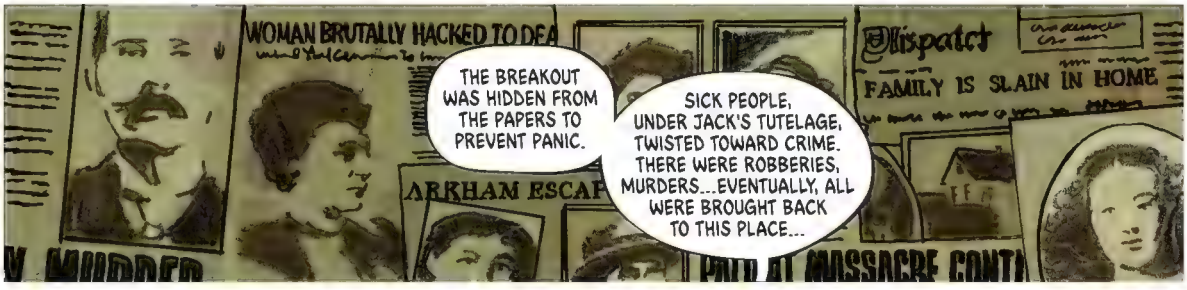
Because I knew.
I knew Jack.

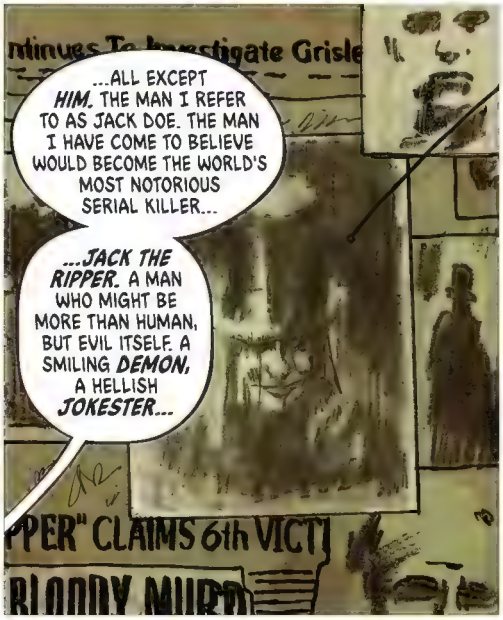
I knew who he would target before making his escape.
I knew...

...my son was lost to me forever. "Tomorrow is a new page..." That phrase of his came back to me over and over. But his story was over...

I NEVER FORGAVE MYSELF FOR THE BREAKOUT. AND...
...FOR WHAT HAPPENED AS A RESULT. TO COPE, I CONVERTED AN OLD STOREROOM...

...AND CREATED THIS.
A RECORD OF MY OWN SHAME.


WOMAN BRUTALLY HACKED TO DEA
THE BREAKOUT WAS HIDDEN FROM THE PAPERS TO PREVENT PANIC.
SICK PEOPLE, UNDER JACK'S TUTELAGE, TWISTED TOWARD CRIME. THERE WERE ROBBERIES, MURDERS...EVENTUALLY, ALL WERE BROUGHT BACK TO THIS PLACE...
Dispatch
FAMILY IS SLAIN IN HOME


...ALL EXCEPT *HIM*. THE MAN I REFER TO AS JACK DOE. THE MAN I HAVE COME TO BELIEVE WOULD BECOME THE WORLD'S MOST NOTORIOUS SERIAL KILLER...
...*JACK THE RIPPER*. A MAN WHO MIGHT BE MORE THAN HUMAN, BUT EVIL ITSELF. A SMILING *DEMON*, A HELLISH *JOKESTER*...

THE TIMELINE FITS. THE M.O. THE--
YES, DOCTOR. I'M WELL AWARE OF YOUR WORKS ON THE SUBJECT.
SPEAKING OF WHICH...

...THE FURNACE ROOM. I'D LIKE TO SEE IT.

NEARLY SIXTY YEARS AGO NOW...
...AND I HAVEN'T BEEN DOWN HERE SINCE. IF I'M BEING HONEST ABOUT IT, I JUST...
...COULDN'T FACE IT.
THIS WALL, WHERE IT'S RE-BRICKED... THIS IS WHERE THEY ESCAPED FROM, CORRECT?
YES.
THEN WHY IS THIS WALL RE-BRICKED AS WELL?
HAVING NOT BEEN DOWN HERE IN AGES, AS I'VE SAID, IT'S NOT SOMETHING I WOULD'VE NOTICED BEFORE.
HMM.
EVER WONDER WHAT ELSE YOU NEVER NOTICED... DOCTOR?
He leaned in and whispered something to me then. Something that stopped me cold.
But before I could respond...
YOU DON'T HAVE TO SEE ME OUT, DOCTOR...
...I LOVE THE PLACE.

That night I could not sleep.
I must have heard him wrong, my buyer.
But part of me knew I had not.
And so I woke and wrote these words, this desperate cry to anyone who might hear it. I shall put this journal in the post as soon as I'm done.

But before I do that, I will go down into the dark one more time.
To prove what I already know.
I shall remove the bricks and find what I know to be there.
The horrible truth.
That truth might be my legacy...
...but this place will not be.

And so I send this journal to you, Captain Flass of the Gotham City Police Department.

I only pray it reaches you in time to stop him.
Journal of Amadeus Arkham

The man who laughs from the dark...

ARK M.
NOW.
Not Jack Doe,
but him...
...the boy.
The one I once
called my son.
JK

The boy who once pretended to believe in this place, in healing the sick...
...but who never did.
See, it was Jack Doe's body I found behind that wall, not the boy's.
tomorrow's a new page
Because it was the boy all along. The voice in Jack Doe's ear, the hand at his cell lock, the knife at his throat...
...For that's what the man, my buyer, whispered to me. That phrase only we two knew. The same one on the note left by Jack's body...
tomorrow's a new page.
The boy did it all just to make a fool of me, my hopes, my beliefs. He's the monster...the one laughing in the dark, always laughing.
And now he has come back to buy this place. I could see it in his eyes, the terror he will make it. Instead of a place to heal the sick, a place to make monsters...you must stop him.
...the man called Jack Grimm. Otherwise, God have mercy on us all.
Signed, Amadeus Arkham.
HEH.
WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO BE LOOKING AT, SIR?

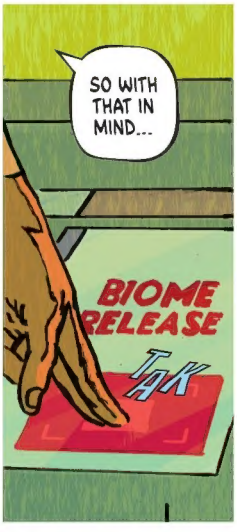
"YOU'RE WATCHING OUR TARGET.
"THEY CALL HIM THE BATMAN."
"WELL, THAT'S CUTE."
"HE'S A FORMER PATIENT HERE, BELIEVE IT OR NOT. ONE WHO ESCAPED.
"OR SO HE THINKS."

"ARE WE PLAYING WITH OUR FOOD HERE?
"WHAT'S NEXT?"
"I HAVE MY PLANS."
"IF I'M BEING HONEST, SIR, I'VE SEEN ENOUGH.
"ENOUGH TO SEE HE'S NO REAL THREAT."

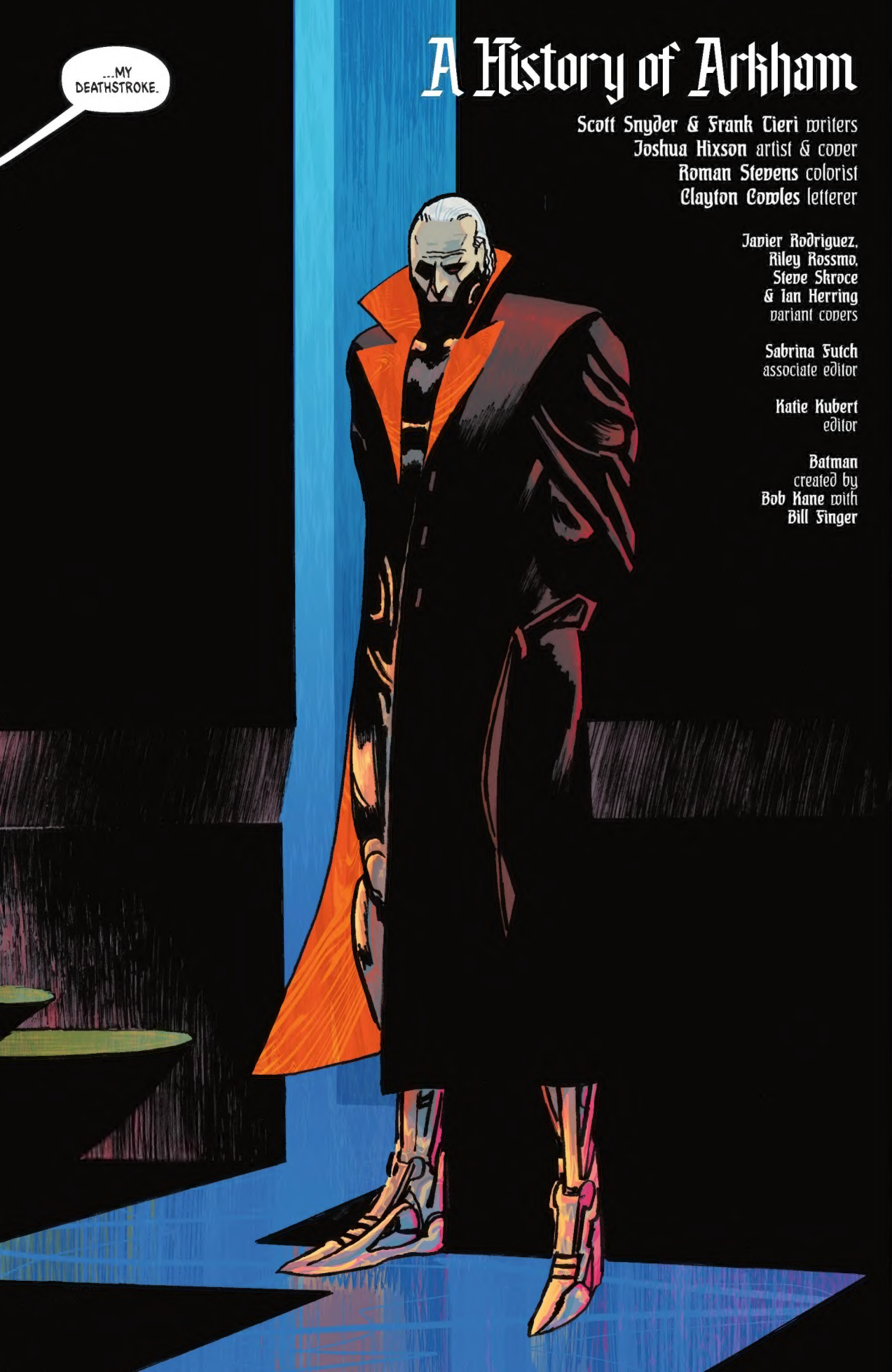
I CAN HANDLE HIM.
EASY.

I KNOW YOU CAN.
ISLEY BIOME
LANGSTROME BIOME

KIRK LANGSTROM
PAMELA ISLEY
HUGO STRANGE
JONATHAN CRANE
BASIL KARLO
JERVIS TETCH
BUT...THERE ARE OTHER FRIENDS I'D LIKE TO INTRODUCE HIM TO IN THE MEANTIME.


SO WITH THAT IN MIND...
BIOME RELEASE
TAK

NONE OF THIS WAS NECESSARY.
DON'T WORRY. YOU'LL GET YOUR CHANCE SOON ENOUGH.
EVERYTHING IN DUE TIME...



A History of Arkham

Scott Snyder & Frank Tieri writers
Joshua Hixson artist & cover
Roman Stevens colorist
Clayton Cowles letterer

Javier Rodriguez, Riley Rossmo, Steve Skroce & Ian Herring variant covers

Sabrina Futch associate editor

Katie Kubert editor

Batman created by **Bob Kane** with **Bill Finger**

COMICS' BEST UNITE FOR A CELEBRATION OF WONDER.
WONDER WOMAN
BLACK and GOLD
2026 SPECIAL
©& ™ DC
UNFORGETTABLE SHORT STORIES BY
TOM KING & MITCH GERADS
STEVE ORLANDO & ROSSI GIFFORD
ALYSSA WONG & KAREN S. DARBOE
JORDIE BELLAIRE & PAULINA GANUCHEAU
Cover by CLIFF CHIANG
JANUARY

DC NATION SPOTLIGHT ON

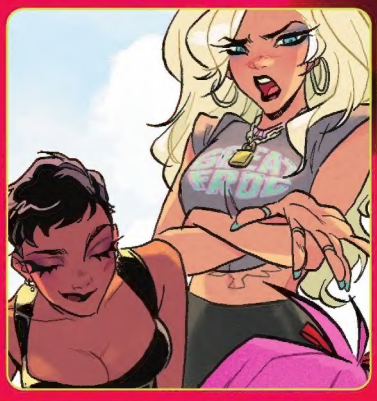
DC BLACK LABEL

SIRENS
LOVE HURTS

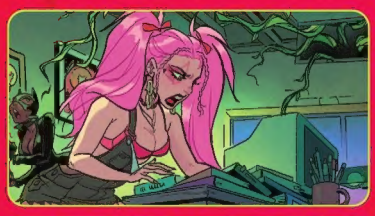
INTERVIEW WITH TINI HOWARD

Get ready for Gotham's most stylish crime story yet! Writer Tini Howard takes us inside *Sirens: Love Hurts*, a four-issue Black Label series that unites her with artist Babs Tarr for an all-new tale of friendship, murder, and romance. Blending the moody, seasonal structure of *Batman: The Long Halloween* with the emotional punch of *Sex and the City*, *Sirens: Love Hurts* follows Poison Ivy, Harley Quinn, Catwoman, and Black Canary through one unforgettable year in Gotham.

What was the origin story of this book?
It actually started as a conversation with DC Editorial, who had the idea for a Sirens story inspired by *Sex and the City*. They said, "This is the book we want to do, and we think these people should make it." Of course, I couldn't say yes fast enough. I had just come off *Catwoman* and *Harley Quinn*, and it felt like the perfect way to keep exploring Gotham in our own little corner.



What can you tell fans about the new villain debuting in the book?
We're introducing a new Gotham villain named Horoscope. She's similar to Calendar Man, but with a celestial motif. She's sexy, dangerous, and a little unhinged, the anti-girl's girl. It's been so fun to craft a villain whose beliefs directly clash with our Sirens' values.



Who do you hope reads *Sirens: Love Hurts*?
Anyone who's ever loved these characters, or anyone who just loves beautiful women being chaotic together! It's for people who grew up with the animated series and want to see them in a story that's stylish, mature, and full of heart.

What makes *Sirens: Love Hurts* unique to Black Label?
The fun of a Black Label book is that it can exist a little outside continuity. We see these women at an earlier point in their lives—Harley has just broken up with the Joker, Bat and Cat aren't officially together, and Dinah's just gotten engaged to Ollie. It lets me play with their emotions before everything's fully formed.

Also the freedom that comes with being a Black Label book is that we can be sexier. It's still a DC comic, there's action and a serial killer to stop, but it's driven by relationships first. We wanted a story where the romance and the friendship matter as much as the action.

The book follows the Sirens through four seasons. How did that structure come about?
I knew I wanted this to feel like a year in their lives. Four girls, four seasons. Every issue is oversized and themed around a different season, from summer wedding prep to winter heartbreak. This calls back to stories like *The Long Halloween* or *Year One*, and I wanted to bring that same rhythm to a story about our Sirens and how their friendship evolves.

DON'T MISS *SIRENS: LOVE HURTS* #1, ON SALE FEBRUARY 2026!

DC COMICS MARIE JAVINS VP – Editor-in-Chief JIM LEE President, Publisher & Chief Creative Officer ANNE DePIES Senior VP & General Manager LARRY BERRY VP – Brand Design & Creative Services LAWRENCE GANEM VP – Editorial Programming & Talent Strategy DAN KNEIPP VP – Strategic Initiatives & Business Affairs JAY KOGAN Senior VP – Legal NICK J. NAPOLITANO VP – Manufacturing, Operations & Collected Editions MARK SHERMAN VP – Digital Growth Strategy & Monetization NANCY SPEARS VP – Sales & Marketing CARRIE WILLIAMS Executive Director – Publicity & Communications

ABSOLUTE BATMAN: ARK-M 1. March, 2026. Published by DC Comics, 4000 Warner Blvd., Bldg. 700, 2nd Floor, Burbank, CA 91522. GST # is R125921072. Copyright © 2026 DC Comics. All Rights Reserved. All characters featured in this issue, the distinctive likenesses thereof, and related elements are trademarks of DC Comics. The stories, characters, and incidents mentioned in this magazine are entirely fictional. DC Comics does not read or accept unsolicited submissions of ideas, stories, or artwork. For Advertising and Custom Publishing contact dccomicsadvertising@dc.com. For details on DC Comics Ratings, visit dc.com/ratings.